

BULLETIN

of the

SCHOOL LIBRARY ASSOCIATION OF CALIFORNIA

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MEETINGS AND EVENTS

Northern Section

Southern Section

SPRING MEETING

Place: Sacramento

Fremont Elementary School

Date: May 14, 1949

Time: 10 a. m.

SPRING MEETING

Place: Riverside

Mission Inn

Date: May 7, 1949

Luncheon and program notification will

be sent out later.

STATE MEETING

Place: Los Angeles Public Library Assembly Room .

Morning session

Biltmore Hotel

Luncheon Session

Date April 2, 1949

Time: 10:00 a. m. Book breakfast (without food); Los Angeles Public Library 12 noon Luncheon; Biltmore Hotel

1:30 p. m. Dynamic groups; Los Angeles Public Library Leaders: Elementary school librarians Jewel Gardiner, Sacramento Lois Fannin, Long Beach

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*Neal, Elizabeth	L	Compton Jr. College	601 S. Acacia St., Compton
*Neel, Helen L.	Ĩ.	Bell H.S.	4328 Bell Ave., Bell
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Nichols, Mrs. Barbara (. L	Carmelita H.S.	3747 E. 61st St., Huntington Park
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*Olson, Edna *O'Neall, Nance		Central J.H.S. Manual Arts H.S.	4795 Magnolia Ave., Riverside 4131 S. Vermont, Los Angeles, 37
Palmer, Carolyn S.	1	Berendo J.H.S.	1155 S. Berendo, Los Angeles, 6
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Partridge, Myriam F.		Exeter Union H.S.	Exeter
Paxton, Mrs. Avis Meig			2135 American Ave., Long Beach, 6 (Home)
the second second	. T	Wilson HS	2839 N. Eastern Ave., Los Angeles, 22
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*Pauley, Mrs. Rose Grega Pearson, Marjory		South Gate H.S.	3351 Firestone Blvd., South Gate

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Peterson, Dorothy L		Hemet	
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*Piesinger, Cecelia L Pigman, Mrs, Florence R. L	Barstow Union H.S.	Barstow	
*Pilat, Irene L	Canoga Park H.S.	Topanga Canyon Blvd., Canoga Pk.	
	Lafayette Elem. S.	25th St. and Chestnut Ave.,	
		Long Beach, 6	
Powell, Florence C. L	Corona S.H.S.	1213 Main St., Corona	
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	School of Library Science	Univ. of Southern California	
		Los Angeles, 7	
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*Revier, Zelma L	Alexander Hamilton H.S.	2955 Robertson Blvd.,	
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	Lakewood J.H.S.	5300 Centralia Ave., Long Beach, 8	
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*Richard, Mrs. Theodora W. L		P. O. Box 1001, Shafter	
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	Riverside College Lib.	Riverside	
	Burbank City Schools	245 E. Magnolia, Burbank	
	Burroughs School Fremont Elem. S.	N.O.T.S. China Lake	
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Rilliker, Florence L	Leave of Absence	Los Angeles, 24 (Home)	
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	Lone Pine Union H.S.	Lone Pine	
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NOTE: Section committee lists, published originally in the issue of November, 1948 are reprinted in this directory issue, pages 7 and 8, with corrections made on the basis of new information made available in the course of compiling the directory for 1948-1949.



ESMER CLARK Reading Specialist Oakland Public Echools

Lloyd George once said, "When we go fishing we don't think about what we like; we think about what fish like." Many of us in secondary schools could profit from Lloyd George's example and select our bait to suit the children who now attend our schools. Certainly they are different from their forbears.

Sociological changes which have taken place in this country during the past years have enabled many more children to attend high school. The new policy of promoting children on the basis of emotional, social, and physiological development rather than on achievement in scholastic pursuits has meant that enrollments in junior and senior high schools are no longer confined to the intellectual elite who are going to college. Increased need for reading on the part of all persons has created a demand for reading proficiency which requires a school wide reading program.

During the thirties, reading in secondary school was interpreted to mean remedial reading. It was commonly felt that such classes were temporary measures planned to care for those few children who had inadvertently slipped into high school without the necessary reading skills. Now, reading is regarded as a continual, developmental process, and provision must be made for further development of reading skills of all pupil.

The developmental reading program utilizes ordinary classroom organization. It includes all teachers and all pupils. Its success is dependent upon teachers recognizing each child's reading level, his strengths and weaknesses, his interests, and background of experience and then providing for his individ-

ual differences. The developmental plan presupposes a variety of materials in each classroom ranging from very simple to more difficult reading materials in each subject area. This is so important a part of the developmental reading program that some administrators have found that by supplying this wealth of reading materials they have changed the thinking of their entire teaching force and have created a demand for in-service training programs designed to help teachers use these materials to advantage.

Certainly, if secondary schools are ever going to "teach all the children," the ubiquitous, one textbook, recitation method must be supplanted by the problem-solving, research method which utilizes many sources of information and gives children an opportunity to participate according to their capacity and bent.

In this period of transition while secondary teachers are being trained to carry on developmental programs, some schools are attempting to meet the reading needs of the children by what is known as a "free-reading program". English classes are exposed to a wide selection of children's books selected not only on a basis of literary merit, but also on interest value to children. These cover many areas of interest and many levels of difficulty. The children are encouraged to read widely and to share reading eperiences in group discussions. Often the classes are divided into several groups, each discussing different types of books. This type of reading approach to English is supplanting the older intensive, analytical study of one or two classics which are often unrelated to children's interests and to their experiential background.

In these schools the teachers and librarians do not limit themselves in their choice of materials to textbooks, readers, and encyclopedias. They utilize all the materials children find interesting. Many of these teachers send for free advertising material from aviation concerns, science supply houses, research laboratories, and catalogs of supplies for sport and hobbies. These are always veritable gold mines of information which children are eager to read.

Teachers who advocate these freereading programs devise many ways to induce children to read extensively. Sometimes the better readers in a class can explore the library and textbook room for easy books, interesting stories, simple articles on various topics for less able pupils to enjoy. When book salesmen call, some teachers ask the children to examine the sample books and encourage the salesman to point out salient features to the children. After he has gone, they have the children decide what proportion of the alloted money they feel should be spent for those particular books. Others encouraged children to visit bookstores to select books they would like to have the librarian order. In this connection the children are taught to secure all the information a librarian needs, such as author, exact title, publisher, place of publication, date, general format, illustrator, and price. Children take particular interest in books they have helped select and consequently enjoy securing this information for such a purpose, whereas they might object to writing a book report requiring these items.

Inasmuch as most adults read little but magazines and newspapers, many teachers teach children to estimate their relative merits by making comparative studies of many magazines or newspapers in the same fashion as they are taught to evaluate books.

Many children read Junior Reviewers, a publication of children's own reviews of recent books. Bright children find writing these book reviews very stimulating; and seeing a review in print serves as motivation not only for the child whose review is chosen, but also for the entire school where the child is known. Book reports rarely

stimulate reading when used as a routine procedure to "check up" on what a child has read. But these reviews sent in to the magazine become bits of creative writing which encourage children to read with discrimination.

Children who share some particular hobby or interest enjoy assembling bibliographies and annotating lists of books and articles which are related to those hobbies or interests. They have "book-selling" contests, where each pupil tries to "sell" his favorite book to the class. His success is measured in terms of the number of children who subsequently read the book.

It pays to utilize current school happenings or timely interests. When a whole school is enthusiastic about interschool ball games, call attention to stories about inter-school contests. When an author has just visited a school or community, display his books and call attention to them. When a book has been made into a movie or has been presented on the radio, put out copies of that book and others by the same author where children may have ready access to them.

Accessibility of books is an important factor in extensive reading programs. Every classroom should have shelves of books available for the child who wishes to browse or read. Such books should be selected in accordance with the reading preferences of the children who use the room and should be changed often enough to maintain the children's interest. Mere accessibility is not enough. however. The success of a "free-reading" program depends upon the ability of a teacher to "sell" books. A teacher's familiarity with, and enthusiasm for children's books is a prerequisite to a successful reading program.

One large city junior high school has attempted to meet its reading program by organizing the English course of study on several different bases. For the foreign-born students whose intelligence quotients are normal but whose language problem makes regular progress difficult, this high school has a

modified program that stresses the learning of English as a language. For those whose intelligence quotients are above 80 but who are seriously retarded in reading, a special reading teacher teaches beginning reading and utilizes as many of the beginning reading methods as seem to be indicated. This class is small, so that it is possible to give individual help, and as soon as a child is capable of reading above fourth grade, he is transferred into regular English classes in which diversified reading materials are used. These English classes follow the developmental reading approach, using extensive reading augmented by visual aids as a means of increasing children's experiences vicariously and eventually leading into the writing skills of the usual English program. College preparatory pupils are given intensive study of classics for part of the time and wide reading from anthologies of modern literature for the rest of the time. This type of program has breadth of scope, provides for individual differences, and serves as an excellent example of meeting the reading problem through diversified English programs.

In other schools the social living courses, made up largely of social studies and English, are the core of the curriculum. Through these areas the reading work is carried on. All the reference reading, topical units, and special reports are planned to include many levels of reading materials. Each teacher is expected to take care of the reading needs of her children insofar as she is able to do so, but in a few of the junior high schools special classes for remedial work are provided. Every teacher in this plan teaches reading.

The popular slogan of the developmental reading program, "Every Teacher a Teacher of Reading," has caused considerable consternation among secondary school teachers whose training has seldom included courses in methods

of teaching reading. This slogan does not imply that every teacher should set aside a stipulated number of minutes of class reading time for the teaching of reading. It does imply that the teacher should think in terms of individual needs in specific classes; that every teacher should think in terms of presenting vocabulary help required for each topic or subject area: that every teacher should teach the reading skills peculiar to the subject taught: that every teacher should fit the work to the experimental background of the class and make it possible for each child to contribute to the group.

In order to translate these principles into classroom procedures teachers need to know how to organize large classes for group work. The materials should be arranged so that they may be readily accessible. Pupils in secondary schools enjoy the responsibility of organizing books and supplies and are generally very meticulous about caring for them. Many teachers bring the entire class together at the beginning and end of the class period to (1) receive directions or instructions (2) share some common experiences and (3) evaluate progress.

Grouping should be flexible and tentative. In some classes children may be re-grouped for each learning situation. Children may be grouped according to interests, capacity, need for instruction, or ability to contribute to the class as a whole. Grouping requires a careful diagnosis of each childs' needs. Necessary data may be secured from cumulative records, interest questionnaires, informal tests, sociograms, and careful observation on the part of the teacher. Betts¹ says,

"A carefully planned program of differentiated instruction for children of all ages does not lead in the

I Emmett Betts, Foundation of Reading Instruction, American Book Company, New York, N. Y. (1946) Chapter XXV, page 173.

direction of highly individualized instruction; instead, the ultimate goal is the development of skills, abilities, attitudes, and information in social situations which capitalize on individual and group contributions. All learning is an individual matter, but teaching is essentially individual guidance in group situations."

In the past many reading teachers were interested merely in the mechanics of reading rather than in personality adjustment through reading. Success was measured in terms of increased speed, word-recognition, or fact gathering. Today, the worth of a reading program is measured in terms of emotional well-being, social adjustment, enthusiasm for reading, and the continuous development of the ability to interpret and evaluate ideas conveyed by the printed page. Working in groups helps to bring all this about by changing the emphasis upon reading for meaning with pupil purpose rather than mechanical skills.

These new approaches to the reading problem create new problems for librarians. Unfortunately, many school systems use trained librarians as textbook clerks, or custodians of books. Much of their time is spent in requisitioning, distributing, collecting, and checking books. In large schools every period of each day is assigned to some particular

class or teacher, and children are rarely given time for browsing and for informal, friendly chats with the librarian. All too often, teachers, recognizing their with children's unfamiliarity books, use this library time as a free period, and the librarian teaches the class. If the free-reading programs, diversified reading plans, or extensive group teaching are to succeed, many of these practices will have to be changed. The joy of bringing children and books together is a creative task for which librarians are especially fitted. They must be given the opportunity of sharing their enthusiasm for and knowledge of books with children who may catch that enthusiasm. There must be time for children to visit the library with no supervision, no ulterior motive, but just for the sheer joy of becoming acquainted with book treasures and of learning to know those who hold the key to them.

As Ann Eaton says, "This then is the problem set before us who care for both children and reading—to awaken. through books, the unimaginative and the imaginative child to the larger world than the one he knows—to give to one the wonder of reality, to the other, the world of romance . . . It means knowing books and children so thoroughly that we may help the dreamer see the wonder and romance of the world about him and the matter-of-fact child to enter the realm of imaginative literature."

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READING FOR THE BRIGHT CHILD

Lois Fannin Office of Library Service Long Beach Public Schools

The child with a high intelligence quotient and superior reading ability who has reached his last year in the elementary school presents a real challenge to those who are responsible for his reading program.

The Long Beach Public Schools have been aware of this problem and have experimented with various plans in an effort to find the solution for it. While the present plan is still in its early stages of development, the results secured to date warrant the belief that it represents a step in the right direction. This article will review its inception, trace the modifications made to date, and indicate changes suggested for its continued use.

In September 1946, small groups of fifth and sixth grade children whose tested reading ability was equal or superior to that of typical seventh grade pupils were organized in several elementary schools for this special program under the instruction of the school librarian and the classroom teacher.

An enriched and comprehensive program challenged the ability of these children in definite areas of literature—biography, mythology and folk lore, poetry and the ballad, translations, and Newbery Medal titles. The specialized training of the librarian enabled her to acquaint the children with the history of literature as it has developed in its various forms and interpretations. The librarian's additional purposes were to provide available books and to create a stimulating interest in all phases of this program.

No effort was made to set up a pattern of uniform procedure for this instruction. Once each week these groups spent a 40-minute period in the school library where they enjoyed the undivided attention of the librarian. Each librarian

recognized differences of reading backgrounds among these accelerated children and varied her approach accordingly. As a result some groups started with mythology, continued with the best in legends and epics, read widely from poetry anthologies and the ballad, sampled collective and individual biography, and ended the year with enjoyment of the Newbery Medal Award books. Other classes began with the Newbery titles, continued in the other literary areas indicated, and concluded their reading for the year with the myths. Each child was given a mimeographed profile chart (15" x 17") that listed these literary areas and served as a means of recording his selected reading in each field.

As the librarian met each group, she created an atmosphere for the contemplated reading. For example, if the area to be studied was translations, she had on display a collection of books printed in their original foreign languages. Beside each was its English translation. Some were books with which the children were familiar, Pinocchio and Bambi being among the assured favorites. Others were books such as Don Ouixote and Children of the Moor, not so well known. With these books carefully arranged so as to make a favorable setting, the librarian let the children examine them, compare them, ask questions springing out of interest and curiosity, discuss the formats, comment upon impressions, and the like. When the children's reactions had revealed to the librarian the high points of their interests, she had the key that opened the door to wide reading in this area. It is easy to understand that with such a vivid introduction to the books no child left the library without carrying with him one or more books chosen on his own volition.

The next week this special group of children met with their classroom teacher who was familiar with the background the librarian had set. During the intervening days they had used the classroom reading period and such leisure time as they desired to devote to reading, in enjoying their book selection. They came together now for a 40-minute period, to discuss informally with their teacher and associates their interpretations of and reactions to the books read. Formal "book reports' were avoided. The children were encouraged to react with utmost freedom to the books they had read. Favorites were shared with such enthusiasm that there were rarely enough copies to meet the subsequent demand.

The teacher and librarians employed many devices to enrich and clarify the children's background and interpretations. Maps were used in establishing geographical settings of translations or in plotting the locale and tracing the travel routes of the epics; e.g., Iliad or the Odyssey. Charts that classified the diety in Greek, Roman, and Norse mythology were used to establish relationships. The time line that charted the development of the fable fascinated the children.

The fields of music and the arts were naturally embraced as interests expanded. When the children were studying such legends as Robin Hood and Siegfried, they made their first contacts with the opera. Many operas were read and their musical scores appreciated. The Ring of the Nibelung and Robin Hood were the spring-board into this new field of appreciation.

Book illustrations were especially noted, and charateristic types of literature were associated with various illustrators. Related reading in fields of travel and history was always encouraged when needed to clarify certain ideas or explanations. Comparisons of literary style, mood, figures of speech, points of view, and the like were pointed out by teacher and librarian whenever the opportunity arose. When the Newbery awards were read, the signifi-

cance of the medal was explained, and the children discovered that awards were given by other nations to their outstanding children's books. As the Andrew Carnegie Medal of Great Britain was discussed, the children became acquainted with a few of the books that had been awarded this medal and showed great interest in comparing them with the Newbery awards.

Each child kept a record, by author and title only, of all the books he read in a given field. Before another area of literature was introduced, the members of the group paused for a careful evaluation of what they had read, each asking himself "Which one, two, or three. of these books would I like to have in my personal library?" These titles, so meaningful to the child, were entered on his profile chart and served as an index revealing that child's literary tastes.

After the program of special instruction had been in operation for some time, it was decided to determine whether the children selected for participation in it were making gains in measurable reading outcomes equal or superior to those achieved by comparable children who were following the regular program of reading instruction.

Children were paired on the basis of equal potentialities for growth. Chronological age, intelligence quotient, social background, and sex were all considered. One of each pair had followed the regular classroom program in reading, while the other had been given the special instruction outlined above.

Both the special instruction or experimental group and the regular instruction or control group were tested eight months from the time the plan was inaugurated.

From the Coordinated Scales of Attainment Battery 6, Form A the following tests were used:

Language, Arts—Reading by Marvin J. Van Wagenen, University of Minnesota. Reading Experience—Literature by Ellen Frogner, Chicago Teachers College.

In addition to these, a locally constructed test was used to measure important outcomes not included in the standardized test; e.g., ability to distinguish between an editor and a publisher, a translator and an illustrator, a ballad and an epic, a fable and a folk tale, a myth and an anthology; the ability to associate well-known translattions with the nations of their origin, and the like.

Even though some children had to be excluded from the final tabulation because of the impossibility of finding others with sufficiently comparable abilities, there were results from forty-three pairs of fifth grade children and one hundred and seven pairs of sixth grade pupils upon which to base the conclusions.

The results of the local test were quite significant. All of the children being bright and capable made splendid progress, but the differences between growth in the control and the experimental groups were easily measurable.

The following tables brief the results:

TABLE 1

Comparison of Average Gains in Reading Made on the Coordinated Scales of Attainment Tests and on the Local Test of Literary Acquaintance by Forty-three Matched Pairs of Fifth Grade Pupils

	Average Gain		Percent of Experimental group making
Measure	Control	Experi- mental	greater gain than matched partners
Coordinated So	eale		
Language Arts			
Reading	3.8 mo.	5.5 mo.	51%
Coordinated Sc	ale		
Reading Exper	ience-		
Literature	5.4 mo.	8.0 mo.	59%
Local Test of Literary			
Acquaintance	1 point	10 point	s 72%

TABLE 2

Comparison of Average Gains in Reading Made on the Coordinated Scales of Attainment Tests and on the Local Test of Literary Acquaintance by One Hundred and Seven Matched Pairs of Sixth Grade Pupils

	Average (Percent of Experimental group making	
Measure	Control	Experi- mental	greater gain than matched partners
Coordinated So	cale		
Language Arts Reading	2.8 mo.	3.4 mo.	37%
Coordinated S Reading Exper			
Literature	2.8 mo	6.6 mo.	47%
Local Test of Literary Acquaintance	1 point	9 points	73%

These were the measurable outcomes in the work.

Even more apparent to those who were privileged to contact these children from day to day were the outcomes which could not be satisfactorily measured; e.g., knowledge of literary forms and terms, growth in related fields of reading, science, travel, and history; an appreciation of world literature; discrimination in literary tastes; and by no means least, growth in spiritual qualities resulting from this association with choice literature. The enthusiasm carried by the group spread throughout the school. The librarians found other children asking for certain Newbery titles that had been highly recommended to them by a member of this group. Parents were especially appreciative of what this special program was doing for their children. As they became aware of this, they were ever ready to supplement the work of the school by taking their children to good plays, fine concerts, and operas.

It was not so much on the basis of the objective data, however, as it was consideration of facilities needed to extend these opportunities that it was decided to make other provision for superior fifth grade children and thus open the way for extending the special program at the sixth grade level.

Efforts for the coming year will be directed toward refining the following aspects of this undertaking: the selection of the pupils to be assigned to these special groups; the method used by pupils in recording their total reading and their personal book preferences; and a means of providing better opportunities for these children when they enter the junior high school.

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